

Before boarding his flight back to Washington, Rep. Peter Welch on Wednesday outlined steps he will take to ensure Vermont receives the federal assistance it needs to recover from Tropical Storm Irene.

Today, Welch will send a letter to all 435 members of the House of Representatives asking for their support in ensuring disaster assistance is available to states that need it. Attached to the letter will be a 17-page presentation depicting the devastation inflicted by Irene on Vermont. (Welch's letter is copied below and the presentation is attached).

This evening, Welch will make Vermont's case to House Democrats at a meeting of the House Democratic Caucus.

Tomorrow morning, Welch will chair a bipartisan meeting he organized of 48 House Members and staff from districts harmed by Irene's path of destruction. FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and Deputy Administrator Richard Serino will participate in the meeting as well as White House staff. Fugate will update Members on the scope of the storm and the ongoing recovery effort. Welch will then lead a discussion on the effort ensure that states affected by Irene receive federal assistance.

"Through no fault of their own, Vermonters were on the bad end of a bad storm," Welch said. "Irene was an act of God. How the recovery effort is funded will take an act of Congress. It is essential that Congress honor the longstanding tradition of ensuring that Americans receive a helping hand when hit by a natural disaster."

Over the holiday weekend, The White House indicated that the damage caused by Irene will total \$1.5 billion.

Dear Representative,

Tropical storm Irene dumped up to eleven inches of rain on Vermont in eight hours. It caused unprecedented damage: washed out roads throughout the state; destroyed and damaged bridges, public buildings and homes; and shuttered businesses vital to our economy. Vermont is responding promptly and energetically to repair and rebuild. But we cannot do it alone.

I am seeking your support to provide Vermont with the federal assistance it needs to help itself recover. Vermonters have always supported relief for communities around the country hit hard by natural disasters, and we always will.

Now we ask for your support to assist Vermont.

Sincerely,

PETER WELCH

Member of Congress

[Tropical Storm Irene Presentation](#)